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ABSTRACT

In all the four literary (oral, scholastic, regional, and national) periods, and also in modern spoken Vietnamese, there has been a strong tendency toward using a two-two syllable rhythm. Four-syllable idiomatic expressions are constructed in this syllable rhythm norm. The 825 expressions listed here with their literal and idiomatic English translations were selected either because of their particular cultural content or because they are fairly well known to the average Vietnamese. The selected four-syllable idiomatic expressions, which are interlocking grammatical constructions, may be classified according to their internal structure, into 17 groups as shown in Table I. The four-syllable idiomatic expressions, no matter what their internal structure, can be used in various positions in a Vietnamese sentence. Examples of different usages are given. A careful study of these idiomatic expressions will provide the student of Vietnamese with more insight into the morphology and syntax of the language, and will give him valuable information about the culture. (Author/AMM)

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FOUR-SYLLABLE IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS IN VIETNAMESE

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by Nguyen Dang Liem

Occasional Papers of
Research Publications & Translations
Institute of Advanced Projects
East-West Center, Honolulu, 1969

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SUMMARY

1. In all the four literary (oral, scholastic, regional, and national) periods, and also in modern spoken Vietnamese, there has been a strong tendency toward using a two-two syllable rhythm. Four-syllable idiomatic expressions are constructed in this syllabic rhythm norm.

2. The 825 expressions listed here (with their literal and idiomatic English translations) were selected either because of their particular cultural content or because they are fairly well known to the average Vietnamese.

3. The selected four-syllable idiomatic expressions, which are interlocking grammatical constructions, may be classified according to their internal structure, into 17 groups as shown in Table I.

4. The four-syllable idiomatic expressions, no matter what their internal structure, can be used in various positions in a Vietnamese sentence. Examples of different usages are given.

5. A careful study of these idiomatic expressions will provide the student of Vietnamese with more insight into the morphology and syntax of the language, and will give him valuable information about the culture.

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By Nguyễn Đăng Liêm

AL 002 376

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1969

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Preface	v
Introduction	1
Notes	7
Group 1 Predicate: Transitive Verb; Direct Object: Noun	9
Group 2 Head: Noun, Modifier: Adjective	20
Group 3 Head: Noun; Modifier: Noun	27
Group 4 Subject: Noun; Predicate: Verb	33
Group 5 Determiner: Numeral; Head: Noun	38
Group 6 Predicate: Verb; Manner Complement: Adjective	41
Group 7 Modifier: Adjective; Head: Noun	44
Group 8 Head: Adjective; Modifier: Noun or Verb	47
Group 9 Predicate: Transitive Verb; Direct Object: Nominalized Adjective	49
Group 10 Predicate: Verb; Manner Complement: Verb	51
Group 11 Predicate: Verb; Manner Complement: Noun	53
Group 12 Head: Noun; Modifier: Verb	55
Group 13 Relator: Time Expression; Head: Noun	57

Group 14
Determiner: Numeral; Head: Verb 59

Group 15
Predicate: Verb; Manner Complement: Adverb 60

Group 16
Predicate: Verb; Location Complement: Adverb 61

Group 17
Head: Noun; Modifier: Indefinite Article 62

PREFACE

An earlier version of Dr. Nguyễn Đăng Liêm's study on quadrisyllabic expressions in Vietnamese was read at the ASPAC (Asian Studies in the Pacific) meeting in Seattle, earlier this year. It was at the same time published in mimeographed form by the recently closed Asia Training Center, Honolulu, where Dr. Liêm used to teach Vietnamese in addition to teaching in the Department of Asian and Pacific Languages at the University of Hawaii, of which he is a faculty member.

That his work has now been selected for wider distribution as an occasional paper of Research Publications and Translations Program, East-West Center, derives from the fact that the subject merits recognition in areas other than that of Vietnamese language teaching. As an interesting linguistic phenomenon, these quadrisyllabic expressions are not confined to Vietnam. They therefore invite comparison with other Asian languages.

Moreover, they demonstrate a literary need for a playful arrangement of words and meanings into a rhythmic pattern. This need is widespread, although the actual forms differ from language to language.

Finally, the semantic component as such offers scope for further studies, which may focus on Vietnamese culture and society or on comparisons between social values, norms, and behavior patterns.

It is to be hoped that this publication will stimulate such research interests in a wider context.

The Editors

September 1969

INTRODUCTION

I. Historical Trends

Vietnamese literature can be divided generally into four periods from its beginning to the present. Each period is marked by distinct characteristics:

(1) an oral literature composed of folk songs,[1] dictions, proverbs, and fairy tales transmitted and enriched from one generation to another;[2]

(2) an essentially Confucianistic,[3] Buddhistic,[4] and Taoistic kind of literature written in Chinese characters;[5]

(3) a regional literature, freed from the scholastic Chinese influence and including masterpieces written in "nôm," or demotic characters;[6]

(4) finally, a truly national literature, using the Romanized alphabet or "quốc-ngữ,"[7] which is colored in both style and thinking[8] by influences from the Western world.

In all of the four literary periods, and also in modern spoken Vietnamese, there has been a strong tendency toward using a two-two syllable rhythm.[9] In other words, Vietnamese syllables[10] are usually grouped in two-two rhythmic groups. This tendency has been crystallized into poetic norms of four-syllable lines.

The folkloric literary period produced many folk songs, proverbs, and idiomatic expressions of four-syllable lines. The following folk song is an example.

Lạy Trời mưa xuống,	I pray for the rain to fall,
Lấy nước tôi uống,	So that I may have water to drink,
Lấy ruộng tôi cày,	Rice fields to plow,
Lấy cơm bát đầy,	Full rice bowls (to eat),
Lấy khúc cá to.	And big slices of fish.

The second period was heavily influenced in both form and content by Chinese poets and philosophers.[11] It is well known that combinations of four syllables have been a favored feature in Chinese writings since the beginning of Chinese literature. A classic example of this fact is the Shi Jing (Kinh Thư, or Book of Songs) by Confucius, which was written almost entirely in four-syllable lines. The influence of the Shi Jing on both Chinese and Vietnamese writing cannot be overemphasized. Until very recently, Chinese and Vietnamese students were required to memorize such classics, making them an integral part of their literary expression. In Chinese literature, four-syllable expressions, often constructed with parallelism and symbolism, can be traced to early times, as, for instance, to the Han or Tang dynasties. The same literary form is often found in Vietnamese poems and is called Tứ-Tuyệt (perfect four-syllable form).

Eugene Ching[12] gives psychological reasons for this fondness for parallelism. He writes: "Chinese architecture, interior decoration, landscaping, and many other aspects show that the Chinese culture is traditionally in favor of symmetric structure." The same can be said about traditional Vietnamese culture. From this symmetry and parallelism, the Vietnamese, probably while imitating the Chinese, developed an intellectual pastime called câu đối (pairing sentences).[13] For example, one may match "Bên dưới có sông" (on the lower side, there is a river) with "Bên trên có núi" (on the upper side, there is a mountain). There are many contrasting pairs like this in Vietnamese. Four-syllable idiomatic constructions are, to a large degree, constructed in this way.

2. Criteria for Selection

Four-syllable idiomatic expressions are very common in Vietnamese. They are frequently used in ordinary conversation as well as in sophisticated

literary writings. An indication of sophistication has always been that a person can quote, in a speech or writing, tetra-syllabic sayings and idiomatic expressions.

There are probably over three thousand four-syllable idiomatic expressions known to traditionally educated Vietnamese. The 825 expressions listed here were selected either because they are fairly well known to the average Vietnamese or because of their particular content. They are presented in the hope that, as ready-made, idiomatic expressions in common use, they will prove useful to students of Vietnamese and of interest to cultural anthropologists and linguists.

3. Classification

The selected 825 four-syllable idiomatic expressions may be classified, according to their internal structure, into 17 groups as shown in table 1. These expressions are interlocking grammatical constructions in that syllables 1 and 3 are of the same part of speech and have the same grammatical function, while syllables 2 and 4 are likewise similar both in nature and function. In the following table only the function and nature of syllables 1 and 2 are given, because syllables 3 and 4 reflect syllables 1 and 2. For example, the first group listed in the table should be interpreted as follows: the 1st and 3rd syllables have the function of a predicate, and each is a transitive verb; the 2nd and 4th syllables have the function of a direct object, and each is a noun.

The expressions in group 7, which have the non-Vietnamese word order of adjective modifier and noun head, are clearly of Chinese origin. The expressions in all other groups may be of either Chinese or pure Vietnamese origin.

Table I

INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF FOUR-SYLLABLE IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS

Group	Internal Structure	N.E.
1	Predicate: Transitive Verb; Direct Object: Noun	187
2	Head: Noun; Modifier: Adjective	130
3	Head: Noun; Modifier: Noun	98
4	Subject: Noun; Predicate: Verb	85
5	Determiner: Numeral; Head: Noun	46
6	Predicate: Verb; Manner Complement: Adjective	45
7	Modifier: Adjective; Head: Noun	41
8	Head: Adjective; Modifier: Noun or Verb	36
9	Predicate: Transitive Verb; Direct Object: Nominalized Adjective	27
10	Predicate: Verb; Manner Complement: Verb	26
11	Predicate: Verb; Manner Complement: Noun	21
12	Head: Noun; Modifier: Verb	21
13	Relator: Time Expression; Head: Noun	20
14	Determiner: Numeral; Head: Verb	17
15	Predicate: Verb; Manner Complement: Adverb	11
16	Predicate: Verb; Location Complement: Adverb	7
17	Head: Noun; Modifier: Indefinite Article	7

N.E. = Number of Expressions

4. Grammatical Functions

The four-syllable expressions, no matter what their internal structure, can be used in various positions in a Vietnamese sentence. They occur in all clause-type matrices. The following examples show the versatility of the four-syllable expressions in the clause matrix.

4.1 As subject in various clause types

a. Equational clause

Bất lỗi bất phải hoài không tốt.

It is no good to point out all the time what is good or bad (in other persons).

b. Intransitive active clause

Áo lụa quần là như anh mới đi được chớ.

Silk dress, crepe pants like you can go thus.

(One can go only if one is as rich as you are.)

4.2 As different types of predicate in various clause types

a. Equational identificative predicate

Anh ấy, tiền rừng bạc biển.

That man, money (as) forest, bills (as) ocean.

(He is very rich.)

b. Active intransitive predicate

Anh ấy đi không về rồi.

That man go negative, come back already.

(He went but was unsuccessful.)

c. Submissive passive predicate

Anh ấy bị họ ăn tươi nuốt sống.

That man be they eat fresh swallow alive.

(He was maltreated by them.)

4.3 As manner complement

Anh ấy đi làm việc <u>chăn đơn gối chiếc</u> nơi xa-xôi.

That man go work single foot, lone pillow in remote place.

(He went to work alone in a faraway place.)

5. <u>Conclusion</u>

There is a great deal of variety in the form, structure, and function of the four-syllable idiomatic expressions in larger grammatical constructions. A careful study of them will provide the student of Vietnamese with more insight into the morphology[15] and syntax of the language, and will also give valuable information about the culture. It is hoped that the student will find these sayings challenging, and that learning many of them will make him more versatile in his linguistic abilities, providing at the same time a deeper understanding of the Vietnamese peoples.

NOTES

1. See Nguyễn Đăng Liêm, "Vietnamese Folk Songs," Hemisphere 12, no. 7 (July 1968):32-34.

2. See Nguyễn Đăng Liêm, ed., "Vietnamese Culture Reader," mimeographed (Honolulu: Asia Training Center, 1968), to be published.

3. See Bửu Dưỡng, "The Confucian Tradition in the History of Vietnamese Education" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1958).

4. See Kenneth W. Morgan, ed., The Path of the Buddha (New York: Ronald Press, 1956).

5. See Vũ Tam Ích, "A Historical Survey of Educational Developments in Vietnam," Bulletin of the Bureau of School Service (University of Kentucky) 32, no. 2 (December 1959):1-135.

6. See Nguyễn Đình Hòa, "Chữ Nôm, the Demotic System of Writing in Vietnam," Journal of the American Oriental Society 79 (1959):270-74.

7. See Nguyễn Đình Hòa, Quốc Ngữ: The Modern Writing System in Vietnam (Washington D. C., 1955).

8. For a study of cultural influences in Vietnam from the outside world, see Gerald C. Hickey, "The Study of a Vietnamese Rural Community - Sociology," mimeographed (Saigon: Michigan State University Vietnam Advisory Group, 1960).

9. For a study of Vietnamese tones and intonation, see Aurélie Hương Mai Trần, "A Study of Intonation in a Southern Vietnamese Dialect" (Ph.D. diss., The Australian National University, forthcoming).

10. For a statistical study on Vietnamese syllables, see Nguyễn Đăng Liêm, "Phonemic Sequences in Vietnamese," Zeitschrift für Phonetik, Sprachwissenschatt, und Kommunikationsforschung 20, no. 4 (1967):325-34.

11. See William T. De Bary et al., Sources of Chinese Tradition (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960).

12. "Four-Syllable Expressions in Chinese," Project on Linguistic Analysis, vol. 7 (Columbus: Ohio State University, 1964), pp. 1-62.

13. See Nguyễn Đình Hòa, "Parallel Constructions in Vietnamese," Lingua 15 (1965):125-39.

14. For a grammatical description of Vietnamese, see Laurence C. Thompson, A Vietnamese Grammar (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1965), or Nguyễn Đăng Liêm, Vietnamese Grammar: A Combined Tagmemic and Transformational Approach (Canberra: Pacific Linguistics, forthcoming).

15. See David D. Thomas, "On Defining the 'Word' in Vietnamese," Văn-Hóa Nguyệt-San (Saigon) 11 (1962):519-23, or Laurence C. Thompson, "The Problem of the Word in Vietnamese," Word 19 (1963):39-52. Four-syllable expressions, according to their grammatical function in larger linguistic units, could, to some extent, be considered as "words."

Group I--187

Predicate: Transitive Verb; Direct Object: Noun

1.	Ái chủng hợp quần	Love for the race, sociability; sociable person
2.	Ái nam ái nữ	Love male, love female; hermaphrodite
3.	An bần lạc đạo	Content with poverty, enjoying naturalism; to be content with one's fate
4.	An cư lạc nghiệp	To live peacefully, to work joyfully
5.	An phận thủ thường	To be content with one's fate, to preserve one's routine
6.	An tâm an dạ	To have one's spirit and mind in peace
7.	An thổ trọng thiên	To rely upon the earth and the sky; fatalism, laziness
8.	Ăn bơ làm biếng	To love and be lazy (lazy man)
9.	Ăn cơm đái bát	Fig: to eat rice but receive nothing (to do good but receive evil)
10.	Ăn cháo đá bát	To eat soup and kick the bowl; to be ungrateful
11.	Ăn dưa ăn muối	To eat cucumbers, to eat salt; to have a poor diet
12.	Ăn ốc nói mò	Fig: eat as a snail, speak blindly; to speak of things one does not know
13.	Ấp đầu gối tay	Fig: to speak, conjugal intimacy (head covered, arm for pillow)
14.	Âu lộ vô cơ	To neglect world affairs in order to enjoy the company of seagulls and herons
15.	Bạ ai vơ nấy	To take what drops down in one's hand; to be friendly with the first person encountered
16.	Bạc tình phụ nghĩa	To be ungrateful, deny loyalty

17.	Bạc thần khinh ngôn	To be talkative and to speak incautiously
18.	Bài nạn tức tranh	To eradicate bad things and to stop disagreements
19.	Bại phong thương hóa	To corrupt the customs, harm ethics
20.	Bại tục đồi phong	To corrupt the customs, corrupted customs
21.	Bày binh bố trận	To display troops, to plan the battle; to display
22.	Bày điều đặt chuyện	To invent items, to create topics; to lie
23.	Bày lời xen hoa	To invent things that don't exist
24.	Bày mưu định kế	To plot, to plan ruses
25.	Bày mưu lập mẹo	To set a snare, to play a trick
26.	Bành da xẻ thịt	To open the skin, to tear up the flesh; to wound savagely
27.	Bán trôn nuôi miệng	To sell the backside to feed the mouth; to prostitute oneself
28.	Bán vợ đợ con	To sell one's wife, to enslave one's child; no other resource, complete poverty
29.	Bạt sơn cử đỉnh	To lift mountains and big pots; to be very strong
30.	Bắt lỗi bắt phải	To point out what is bad and what is good
31.	Bấm bụng quyết lòng	To pinch one's stomach, to make up one's mind; to be content with less than one expected
32.	Bẻ hành bẻ tỏi	To pick onion, to pick garlic; to criticize people for small imperfections
33.	Bẻ ngó lìa tơ	To pick buds, separate young things; to depart
34.	Bế môn tỏa cảng	To close doors and entries; isolationism
35.	Biên phòng tịch ký	Fig: to mortgage

36. Bới lông tìm vết	To search for a small defect under the plummage; to look for minute defects
37. Bòn tro đãi trấu	To preserve ashes, to sort out the rice husks; avarice
38. Bỏ phong tróc ảnh	To catch the wind and the shadow; i.e., that which is impossible
39. Buôn mây bán gió	To buy clouds, sell wind; risky commerce
40. Buôn thần bán thánh	To buy idols, sell saints; simony
41. Cải ác tùng thiện	To abandon bad behavior; to adopt good behavior
42. Cấm chợ ngăn sông	To forbid marketing, to block rivers; isolationism
43. Cầm cân nảy mực	To handle the scale, to use ink; to direct, to give directions or rules
44. Cầm phòng tuần trấp	To take care of a room, to guard crates; to serve someone
45. Cắn răng bóp bụng	To keep one's teeth tight, to squeeze one's belly; to keep quiet, to be silent
46. Cầu mây khẩn gió	To pray to the clouds, beg the wind; to run after fruitless things
47. Cày mây cuốc gió	Plow clouds, hoe the wind; free life in the open air
48. Cậy thế cậy thần	To rely upon strong position; saintly power
49. Co đầu rút cổ	To bow one's head, to cringe; to be timid
50. Cố công cùng sức	To make efforts, exhaust one's strength
51. Coi gió bỏ buồm	To observe the wind in order to hoist the sails
52. Cởi lòng phơi ruột	To unveil one's heart, to expose one's bowels; to reveal one's innermost concepts

53.	Chận ngõ đón truông	To bar the way, to close the path; to obstruct someone's opportunity
54.	Chắp cánh liền cành	To put on wings, to link branches; to give someone a start
55.	Chỉ non thề biển	To point to the mountain, to swear upon the sea; to vow
56.	Chia lòng chia trí	To divide the heart, to divide the mind; to be absentminded
57.	Chia uyên rẻ tuý	To divide ducks and essences; to separate a couple
58.	Chiêu binh mãi mã	To recruit troops, to buy horses; to prepare for war
59.	Chiêu hiền đãi sĩ	To welcome sages, to honor scholars
60.	Chọc trời khuấy nước	To tickle the sky, to stir up water; to be very powerful
61.	Chọn đá thử vàng	To select stones in order to test the gold, evaluate the gold content; to test
62.	Chôn nhao cắt rún	To bury the placenta, to cut the umbilical cord; birthplace
63.	Chơi trăng thưởng nguyệt	To enjoy the moon; to return to nature
64.	Chửi chó mắng mèo	To swear at dogs, to curse cats; to curse someone by disparaging his animais
65.	Day tay nắm miệng	Trembling hands, clenched mouth; to be angry
66.	Dắt lối đưa đường	To conduct and show the way
67.	Dập liễu vùi hoa	To bury the willow, to destroy the flower; to assault a girl
68.	Di tình thích tính	To like one's behavior and character
69.	Dĩ ân báo oán	To receive good and return evil
70.	Dĩ công đại chúng	To replace free distribution by individual labor
71.	Dĩ độc chế độc	To use one poison to neutralize another

72. Dĩ đức báo đức	To return good for good received
73. Dĩ đức báo oán	To return good for evil received
74. Dĩ huệ tru oán	To use kindness to calm anger
75. Dĩ huyết tẩy huyết	To use blood to clean blood; an eye for an eye
76. Dĩ lộ đồng qui	To arrive at the same aim by different ways
77. Dĩ oán báo oán	To return evil for evil received
78. Dịch tục di phong	To change the customs
79. Dĩ thân dịch vật	To make oneself a slave of material things
80. Dở ngô dở khoai	To be half corn, half potato; cannot determine what it is
81. Dời non tắt bể	To move mountains and dry up seas; accomplish impossible task
82. Dựng vợ gả chồng	To marry off one's children
83. Đánh nam dẹp bắc	To fight in the South, to pacify the North
84. Đánh trống dọng chuông	To beat drums, to ring bells; to overpublicize
85. Đặng cá quên nôm	To get the fish, to forget the trap; to be ungrateful
86. Đặng chim bẻ ná	To get the bird, to destroy the crossbow; to be ungrateful
87. Đặng vợ mất chồng	To obtain the wife, to lose the husband; it is not wise to interfere in a family's discussion
88. Điều binh khiển tướng	To give orders to troops and officers
89. Định đôi gả lứa	To match a couple, to marry off one's children
90. Đọc sách ngâm thơ	To read books, to recite poetry; to be a scholar
91. Đội trời đạp đất	To carry the sky in one's hand, to stamp the earth with one's feet; to live

92. Đơm hoa kết quả — To bear flowers, to form fruit; to get results

93. Được voi đòi tiên — To receive an elephant, to ask for an angel; to ask for too much

94. Ép liễu nài hoa — To squeeze the willow, to insist upon the flower; to violate a girl

95. Ganh hiên ghét ngõ — To hate veranda and gate; to hate somebody, to envy somebody

96. Ghẹo nguyệt trêu hoa — To kid the moon and the flower; to court a girl

97. Giành trâu cướp ruộng — To fight over buffaloes, to steal rice fields; to take by force

98. Giấu đầu lòi đuôi — To hide the head and show the tail; to unsuccessfully hide something

99. Gìn vàng giữ ngọc — To preserve gold and pearls; to preserve one's chastity

100. Giồi phấn thoa son — To put on powder and lipstick, to make up; to hide imperfections

101. Giục ngựa buông cương — To speed up the horse, to loosen the reins; to hurry

102. Hái mận bẻ đào — To pluck pears and peaches; to violate a girl

103. Hao binh tổn tướng — To lose troops and officers; to waste

104. Hao tài tốn của — To lose money and property; to waste money

105. Hẹn ngọc thề vàng — To swear upon pearls and gold; to vow

106. Hờn duyên tủi phận — To hate one's fate, to be ashamed of one's destiny

107. Kết cỏ ngậm vành — To weave grass holding the edge in the mouth, to form the hem; to be grateful

108. Kết tóc xe tơ — To tie up hair, to bind up silk; to get married

109. Kết thù gây oán — To crystallize hatred, to create animosity; to make enemies

110.	Khai đường mở lối	To open a road and thoroughfare; to begin something
111.	Khai hoa nở nhụy	To flower, to develop stamins; to give birth to a child
112.	Khi cựu nghinh tân	To look down upon the old, to overwelcome the new
113.	Khua môi múa mỏ	To move lips, to manipulate the mouth; to talk too much
114.	Lắc đầu tắc lưỡi	To shake one's head, to cluck one's tongue; to show one's discontentment, discouragement
115.	Lấy mặt làm trái	To turn the right side into the left side; to distort
116.	Lấy ơn làm oán	To return bad for good; to be ungrateful
117.	Liệng đá vá trời	To throw boulders, to mend the sky; impossible task
118.	Liều thân hoại thể	To sacrifice the body, to ruin the body; to commit suicide
119.	Long trời lở đất	To shake the sky, to erode the earth; terrible
120.	Lừa thầy phản bạn	To cheat teachers, to betray friends
121.	Mang râu đội mũ	To put on a beard, to wear a hat; to play a role
122.	Mơ hoa tưởng nguyệt	To dream of flowers, to think of the moon; to think of the impossible
123.	Mua lòng bán thịt	To buy entrails, to sell meat
124.	Nâng khăn sửa trấp	Fig: to elevate one's turban, to prepare a suitcase; to take care of one's husband
125.	Ném đá dấu tay	To throw rocks, to hide one's hands
126.	Ngăn sông cách núi	To cut off rivers, to separate mountains; to separate two spouses, two lovers, to be separated
127.	Ngâm hoa vịnh nguyệt	To read poems glorifying flowers and the moon; to return to nature

128.	Ngắm trăng thưởng nguyệt	To admire the moon, to enjoy the moon; to return to nature
129.	Phản dân hại nước	To betray the people, to do harm to the country
130.	Phò vua giúp nước	To assist the king, to help the country
131.	Quất ngựa ra roi	To whip the horse, to take out the whip
132.	Quấy hôi bôi lọ	To stir up a stench, to blacken with soot; to humiliate
133.	Rào đường rấp ngõ	To fence off roads, to close entries
134.	Soi gương đánh phấn	To look at a mirror, to put on powder; to make up
135.	Soi đường dẫn lối	To light up the road, to show the way
136.	Sơn son thếp vàng	To paint red, to sculpt with gold
137.	Tạo thiên lập địa	To create the sky, to form the earth; the beginning
138.	Tầm hoa vấn nguyệt	To search for flowers, to ask the moon; to see a girl and talk to her
139.	Tầm tiên học đạo	To search for sages, to study religion
140.	Tích cốc phòng cơ	To preserve grains, to avert bad events; to be prudent
141.	Tô son điểm phấn	To put on lipstick, to put on powder; to make up
142.	Tống cựu nghinh tân	To say farewell to the old, to welcome the new
143.	Tu binh mãi mã	To improve troops, to buy horses; to prepare for a war
144.	Tu nhơn tích đức	To improve oneself, to accumulate moral qualities
145.	Tu tâm dưỡng tánh	To improve one's heart, to improve one's character
146.	Tụng kinh gõ mõ	To say prayers, to beat the gong; to observe religious practices

147.	Tùy cơ ứng biến	To observe circumstances (in order to) modify accordingly
148.	Tham công tiếc việc	To be greedy for citations, to be reluctant to do work
149.	Tham đó bỏ đăng	To be greedy for a floating fish trap, to neglect a stationary fish trap; to be frivolous
150.	Tham quyền cố vị	To be greedy for power, to strengthen one's position
151.	Thảo củi xổ lồng	To open a kennel, to free from a cage; to free oneself
152.	Thay bậc đổi ngôi	To change one's social rank, to replace one's role
153.	Thay dạ đổi lòng	To change stomach, replace bowels; to change one's sentiments
154.	Thay hình đổi dạng	To change one's appearance, to disguise
155.	Thay hồn đổi xác	To change soul, to transform body; to become different
156.	Thay xiêm đổi áo	To get changed, to change clothing; to change
157.	Theo chơn nối gót	To follow in one's footsteps
158.	Thề non hẹn biển	To swear upon mountains, to promise upon seas; to vow
159.	Thêm mắm dặm muối	Fig: to add preserved fish and salt; to invent details
160.	Thi tài đua sức	To compete for talent and force
161.	Thờ cha kính mẹ	To worship the father, to respect the mother
162.	Thụ ân báo oán	To return evil for good
163.	Tranh danh đoạt lợi	To usurp fame, to plunder profit
164.	Tranh lèo giựt giải	To compete for awards
165.	Tranh quyền cướp nước	To usurp power, to plunder a country
166.	Trao thân gởi phận	To give one's body and destiny into someone else's hands; to get married (for a girl)

167.	Trêo hoa ghẹo nguyệt	To tease flowers, to bother the moon; to court a girl
168.	Trọng nghĩa khinh tài	To respect moral virtues, to disregard riches
169.	Trốn chúa lộn chồng	To run away from the lord, to confuse the husband; to be unfaithful (for a wife)
170.	Trốn sưu lậu thuế	To dodge taxes
171.	Trợn mắt phùng mang	To round one's eyes, to puff out one's cheeks; to show one's anger
172.	Trù cha hại mẹ	To curse the father, to harm the mother
173.	Trù mưu tính kế	To plan a strategy, to project a scheme
174.	Truyền tử lưu tôn	To transmit to sons, to retransmit to grandsons
175.	Vạch lá tìm sâu	To uncover leaves to search for worms; to look for minute details
176.	Van công khất nợ	To beg for merit, to ask for postponement in paying one's debt
177.	Vay mật trả gừng	To borrow honey and pay back ginger
178.	Vấn tổ tầm tông	To retrace the family line, to make inquiries about one's ancestors
179.	Vẽ rắn vẽ rồng	To draw snakes and dragons; to make up details
180.	Vong ân bội nghĩa	Ungrateful, thankless
181.	Vu oan giá họa	To calumniate, to slander
182.	Vung phân tưới nước	To spread fertilizer, to irrigate; to provide fully
183.	Xả thân cầu đạo	To sacrifice one's body, to search for religion; to enter a religious order
184.	Xây thành đắp lũy	To build citadels, to construct fortifications
185.	Xo vai rút cổ	To hunch one's shoulders, to draw in one's neck; timid

186. Xoe tơ kết tóc — To bind silk, to weave hair; to get married

187. Xôi kinh nấu sử — To boil a book, to cook history; to study hard

Group 2--130

Head: Noun; Modifier: Adjective

1.	Áo lụa quần là	Silk dress, crepe pants; well dressed, rich
2.	Binh hùng tướng mạnh	Strong troops, powerful officers; strong army
3.	Biển cạn non mòn	Dry sea, corroded mountain; eternal vows
4.	Biển rộng trời cao	Wide ocean, high sky; open space, great opportunity
5.	Bướm lã ong lơi	Incontinent butterflies and bees; loose morality
6.	Canh tàn khắc lậu	Time flies
7.	Cây cao bóng mát	Tall tree, refreshing shade; good place, opportune situation
8.	Cỏ rậm rừng hoang	Thick grass, savage forest; wild area
9.	Con hiền dâu thảo	Pious son, virtuous daughter-in-law; good family
10.	Con thảo cháu hiền	Pious child, virtuous grandchild; good family
11.	Con thơ vợ dại	Young child, inexperienced wife; i.e., situation of a man who has a heavy family duty
12.	Cờ gian bạc lận	To cheat at gambling, to cheat
13.	Cơm cao gạo kém	Expensive cooked rice, scarce uncooked rice; high cost of living
14.	Cơm lành canh ngon	Healthy rice, tasty soup; i.e., harmony in family
15.	Cơm thừa cá cặn	Scraps of rice and fish; scraps of food, impoverished situation
16.	Cơm trắng cá tươi	White rice, fresh fish; good food
17.	Của ít lòng nhiều	Little thing, big heart; small offerings but with lots of goodheartedness

18.	Cửa cao nhà rộng	High door, large house; rich
19.	Cha già con muộn	Old father, late child
20.	Cha hiền con thảo	Sage father, pious son; well-educated family
21.	Cha lú chú khôn	Stupid father, intelligent uncle; to have a relative to get advice from
22.	Chân đơn gối chiếc	Single foot, lone pillow; to be lonely
23.	Chồng chung vợ chạ	Husbands and wives in common; polyandry, loose sexual behavior
24.	Chồng khéo vợ khôn	Skillful husband, intelligent wife; well-matched couple
25.	Chơn lấm tay bùn	Dirty foot, muddy hand; hardworking people
26.	Chơn mền tay yếu	Soft foot, weak hand; physically weak, the fairer sex
27.	Chơn ướt chơn ráo	Wet foot, dry foot; inexperienced, new in the profession or situation
28.	Chức trọng quyền cao	Important job, great authority; very important people
29.	Da nhăn má cóp	Shrunken skin, hollow cheeks; old age or marks of hardship
30.	Danh chánh ngôn thuận	Correct address, proper speech; correctness, equity in speech
31.	Dao to búa lớn	Big knife, large hammer; i.e., dangerous person
32.	Đất lạ trời xa	Strange land, faraway sky; strange area, unfamiliar place
33.	Đất rộng trời cao	Wide land, high sky; great opportunity
34.	Đầu bù tóc rối	Tangled hair; sloppy appearance
35.	Đầu đen máu đỏ	Black head, red blood; countrymen
36.	Đầu râu tóc bạc	Head with beard, white hair; age, experience
37.	Đầu tắc mặt tối	Dirty head, dark face; hardworking people

38.	Đầu xanh tuổi trẻ	Green head, young age; youth, inexperience
39.	Điều nặng tiếng nhẹ	Strong cause, weak argument; arguments
40.	Đồng khô cỏ cháy	Dried field, burnt grass; poor area
41.	Gan bầm ruột héo	Dried liver, wilted intestines; very sad
42.	Gan đục lòng trong	Troubled liver, clear heart; intricacies of human sentiment
43.	Gối chiếc chăn đơn	Lone pillow, single blanket; loneliness
44.	Gừng cay muối mặn	Peppery hot ginger, salty salt; hard realities of life
45.	Giấy trắng mực đen	White paper, black ink; irrefutable proof
46.	Gió lặng sóng êm	The wind stops, the waves are calm; peace
47.	Hoa tàn nhụy úa	Wilted flower, yellowing stamins; old age
48.	Hoa thải hương thừa	Discarded flower, unwanted perfume; woman with questionable past
49.	Hoa thơm cỏ lạ	Fragrant flower, foreign grass; newness, exoticism
50.	Hương phai phấn lạt	Vanished perfume, faded powder; age, lack of freshness
51.	Hương tàn khói lạnh	Withered incense, cold smoke; the forgotten dead
52.	Khố rách áo ôm	Torn shorts, torn dress; poor, poverty
53.	Liễu yếu đào thơ	Weak willow, young peach tree; young girl
54.	Lòng ngay dạ thẳng	Straight intestines, straight stomach; frankness, innocence
55.	Lời nặng tiếng nhẹ	Heavy word, light voice; arguments
56.	Lưng dài vai rộng	Long back, wide shoulder; physical strength
57.	Lưng mỏi gối dùng	Tired back, shrunken knee; exhausted

58.	Lương cao bổng hậu	High salary, good benefits; good job
59.	Ma thiêng nước độc	Powerful ghosts, contaminated water; highlands
60.	Mai gầy liễu yếu	Thin willow, weak cherry tree; young girl
61.	Mắt lờ tai điếc	Dull eye, deaf ear; to be old, to ignore
62.	Mặt bủng da chì	Flabby face, dark skin; ugliness
63.	Mặt dặng mày dày	Thickened face, hardened eyebrows; ashamed
64.	Mặt to tai lớn	Big face, long ear; powerful
65.	Mâm cao cỗ đầy	Full food tray, heavy load of food; feast, treat
66.	Mẹ góa con côi	Mother widowed, child orphan; death of the father
67.	Mẹ tròn con vuông	Round mother, square child; mother and child both healthy
68.	Mình gầy mặt võ	Thin body, exhausted face; emaciated
69.	Mình trần thân trụi	Naked body; impoverished, complete poverty
70.	Mồ xiêu mã lặng	Tilted gravestone, quiet tomb; forgotten dead
71.	Mồ yên mã đẹp	Peaceful tomb, beautiful gravestone; well-worshipped ancestors
72.	Môi hở răng lạnh	Fig: defenseless, imminent danger, the peril is big
73.	Môn đương hộ đối	Family of the same social rank
74.	Mưa dại gió mai	Wild rain, northwest wind; unexpected circumstances
75.	Mưa sầu gió thảm	Sad rain, dramatic wind; sad circumstances
76.	Mưa thuận gió hòa	Favorable rain, good wind; favorable circumstances
77.	Năm cùng tháng tận	Ending year, finishing month; hopeless

78. Năm vận tháng hạn — Year of bad luck, dry month; bad circumstances

79. Nắng dãi mưa dầu — Burning sunshine, rain of oil; unbearable hardships

80. Niên tráng lực cường — The healthy years, powerful strength; youth and strength

81. Non bồng nước nhược — Light mountain, weak water; weak country

82. Non cao bể rộng — High mountain, wide sea; difficulties

83. Non xanh nước biếc — Blue mountain, dark blue water; natural beauty

84. Ngọc tốt vàng ròng — Good pearl, pure gold; pure virgin girl

85. Người dưng nước lạ — Foreign people, strange country; foreign land

86. Người no kẻ đói — Sated people, hungry people; inequality in life

87. Người khôn kẻ dại — Intelligent people, stupid masses (some are intelligent)

88. Người phải kẻ quấy — Right people, wrong people; the human race

89. Người phàm mắt tục — Mortal being, abject eye; the mortals, this world

90. Người sang kẻ hèn — Rich people, poor people; inequality of life

91. Nhà cao cửa rộng — High house, wide door; rich

92. Nhà dột cột xiêu — Leaking house, tilting pillar; decreptitude

93. Nhà hoang chủ chết — Deserted house, dead owner; deserted place

94. Nhà ngang dãy dọc — Wide house, numerous roofs; rich

95. Nhà tan cửa nát — Crumbled house, crushed door; disaster

96. Phận ẩm duyên hôi — Damp destiny, smelly condition; bad luck

97. Phận đẹp duyên ưa — Beautiful destiny, pleasing condition; good luck

98.	Phu quý phụ vinh	Noble husband, glorious wife
99.	Phước chí tâm tinh	Happiness, intelligence
100.	Quan cần dân trễ	Mandarin needy, subjects late (when the Mandarin is in trouble, the people are late)
101.	Quần bó áo ôm	Tight trousers, clinging dress; sexy dress
102.	Quần manh áo rách	Trousers in pieces, shirt torn; poor people
103.	Quần trần áo trụi	Bare trousers, naked dress; very poor
104.	Quyền cao lộc cả	Great authority, huge happiness; influential and lucky
105.	Quyền cao tước trọng	Great authority, important grade; influential
106.	Răng long tóc bạc	Shaky tooth, white hair; old
107.	Sen ngó đài tơ	Lotus that is half open, tender peach; young girl
108.	Sơn cao thủy thẳm	High mountain, deep water; difficulties
109.	Sơn cùng thủy tận	At the end of the mountains and of the sea; very remote place
110.	Sức cùng lực tận	At the end of one's force, strength exhausted, power ended; exhaustion
111.	Tai ngơ mắt điếc	Unseeing eye, deaf ear; to ignore things
112.	Tai to mắt lớn	Big ear, huge eye; very important person
113.	Tài sơ trí siển	Elementary talent, rudimentary intelligence; not very well qualified
114.	Tay lấm chơn bùn	Spotted hand, muddy foot; hardworking people
115.	Tay không chơn rồi	Empty hand, still foot; idle
116.	Tình ngay lý gian	True situation, false argument; the state of a suspect who cannot demonstrate his innocence

117.	Tóc bạc da mồi	White hair, spotty skin; old age
118.	Thân bại danh liệt	Paralyzed body, ruined fame; ended career
119.	Thân cô thế quả	Lonely body, impaired authority; no supporters
120.	Thế cùng lực tận	Finished authority, ended force; at tne end of one's force and resources
121.	Thóc cao gạo kém	Expensive paddy, scarce rice; high cost of living
122.	Trà dư tửu hậu	Bountiful tea, plenty of wine; social gathering, conversation
123.	Trai tài gái sắc	Talented male, beautiful female; well-matched couple
124.	Trầu héo rượu lạt	Withered betel leaf, flavorless liquor; loss of interest
125.	Trời cao bể rộng	High sky, wide sea; great opportunity
126.	Trời cao đáy dài	High sky, deep sea bottom; great challenge
127.	Trời quang mây tạnh	Clear sky, dispersed cloud; clear sailing ahead (we have passed through the difficulties)
128.	Trời thẳm vực sâu	Deep sky, profound abyss; great challenge
129.	Văn hay chữ tốt	Good literary style, beautiful writing; well educated
130.	Vợ yếu con thơ	Weak wife, young child; heavy family responsibilities

Group 3--98

Head: Noun; Modifier: Noun

1.	Áo vải quần bô	Cotton dress, linen pants; peasantry
2.	Ân cha nghĩa mẹ	Father's gratitude, mother's kindness
3.	Ân vua lộc nước	King's gratitude, country's grace; royal favor
4.	Bạc nến vàng thoi	Masses of silver and gold
5.	Bãi bể nương dâu	Hazards of life
6.	Băng cơ ngọc cốt	Skin like ice, bones like pearls; beautiful girl
7.	Binh rồng tướng cọp	Elite soldiers, select officers
8.	Bút thơ đồ trận	Literary studies
9.	Cá chậu chim lồng	Fish in the pool, birds in the cage; to lose one's liberty
10.	Cành vàng lá ngọc	Golden branch, pearl leaf; beautiful girl
11.	Cây nhà lá vườn	Tree of the house garden, leaf from the garden; fig: offerings that are not very worthy but goodheartedly given
12.	Con dòng cháu giống	Descendant of a very fine family
13.	Con ong cái kiến	Bees and ants; humble people
14.	Con ông cháu cha	Fig: son of a very important person
15.	Con rồng cháu tiên	Children of dragons, nieces and nephews of fairies
16.	Công cha nghĩa mẹ	Deeds of the father, affection of the mother
17.	Cơm nhà việc người	One's own rice, another person's work; to work for others' benefit
18.	Của chồng công vợ	Husband's belongings, wife's work
19.	Củi quế gạo châu	Wood as expensive as cinnamon, rice as expensive as pearls; scarcity, penury

20. Cung vàng bể ngọc — Golden palace, ocean of pearls; opulence

21. Chiếu đất màn trời — The earth as a sleeping mat, the sky as a tent

22. Chim trời cá nước — Bird in the sky, fish in the water; something impossible to get hold of

23. Chồng chúa vợ tôi — The husband is like a lord, the wife a slave

24. Chồng loan vợ phượng — Husband as a phoenix, wife as a phoenix; well-matched couple

25. Chơn giày chơn giép — Foot in shoe, foot in sandal; rich people

26. Chơn mây cuối trời — The foot of clouds, the end of the sky; very far lands

27. Chơn mây mặt biển — The foot of clouds, the surface of water; very far places

28. Chớp biển mưa nguồn — Thunder on the sea, rain at the source; something very common

29. Chước quỉ mưu thần — The stratagem of a ghost, the scheme of a devil; skillful but evil tactics

30. Đàn anh lũ yến — Band of orioles, flock of swallows; lovers

31. Đầu bò đầu bướu — Head and hump of an ox; very stubborn

32. Đầu dây mối nhợ — The beginning of the thread; the cause

33. Đầu đình xó ngõ — In every corner; homeless

34. Đầu đường cuối chợ — Beginning of a street, end of a market; beggars' place

35. Đầu ghềnh cuối bãi — The top of a waterfall, the end of a beach; inaccessible place

36. Đường kim mối chỉ — The way of the needle, the beginning of the thread; needlework

37. Đầu mày cuối mắt — Beginning of eyebrows, end of eyes; to make eyes (at someone)

38. Đầu Ngô mình Sở — Ngô heads, Sở bodies; incoherence

39. Đầu sông ngọn nguồn — Beginning of the river, source of the spring; beginning

40. Đầu trâu mặt ngựa — Buffalo's head, horse's face; unscrupulous people

41. Đầu voi đuôi chuột — Elephant's head, mouse's tail; imbalance

42. Đường chỉ mũi kim — Thread line, needle head; needlework

43. Gang vàng dạ thép — Gold liver, steel stomach; strong-willed person

44. Gia viên điền sản — Heritage

45. Giá áo túi cơm — Coat hanger, rice pocket; useless person

46. Góc biển chơn trời — The corner of the sea, the foot of the sky; faraway place

47. Hang cùng ngõ hẽm — Deadend cave and street; very remote and unknown place

48. Hòn tên mũi đạn — Arrowhead, bullet point; deadly hazards

49. Hương đăng trà quả — Incense sticks, tea and fruit; offerings

50. Kẻ răng chơn tóc — The root of a tooth, of a hair; deep subconscious thoughts of a person

51. Khô lân chả phụng — Dried unicorn meat, phoenix pie; delicacies

52. Khuôn vàng thước ngọc — Mold of gold, yardstick of jade; perfection

53. Lá gió cành chim — Leaf of the wind, branch of the bird; the path of love

54. Lá ngọc cành vàng — Leaf of jade, branch of gold; beautiful girl

55. Lầu son gác tía — Red floor, pink penthouse; place for a noble girl to live

56. Lòng chim dạ cá — Entrails of birds, stomach of fish; ungrateful, disloyal

57. Lòng gấm dạ thêu — Brocaded entrails, embroidered stomach; kindhearted

58.	Lòng lang dạ thú	Entrails and stomach of animals; cruel
59.	Lòng son dạ đá	Entrails of vermilion, stomach of rock; inflexible
60.	Lời vàng tiếng ngọc	Words of gold, voice of jade; kind words
61.	Lũ kiến đàn ong	Group of ants and bees; a crowd
62.	Màn trời chiếu đất	The sky as a tent, the earth as a sleeping mat; homeless vagrant
63.	Manh quần tấm áo	Pants, dresses; clothing
64.	Mắt phượng mày tằm	Eyes of a phoenix, eyebrows in the shape of the silkworm; feminine beauty
65.	Mặt hoa da phấn	Face as a flower, skin white as powder; feminine beauty
66.	Mặt chai da đá	Face of glass, skin of rocks; cruel, stubborn
67.	Mặt người dạ thú	Human face, animal heart; cruel, bad
68.	Mặt sắt râu ngô	Steel face, corn whiskers; insensible, indifferent
69.	Mặt sứa gan hùm	Liver of jellyfish, liver of a tiger; cruel
70.	Mẹ cú con tiên	Owl for mother, angel for son
71.	Mây Sở mưa Tần	Sở clouds, Tần rains; sexual relations
72.	Mẹ gà con vịt	Hen for mother, duckling for offspring; stepmother raising children of the first marriage
73.	Mèo đàng chó điếm	Vagrant cat, frivolous dog; good-for-nothing, scamp
74.	Mèo mả gà đồng	Cats of cemeteries, hens of the open air; good-for-nothing, shameless
75.	Miệng hùm gan sứa	Mouth of tigers, liver of jellyfish; cruel
76.	Miệng hùm nọc rắn	Mouth of tigers, venom of snakes; terrible words
77.	Mình đồng gan sắt	Body of copper, liver of steel; inflexible

78. Mình hạc xương mai — Body of a crane, bones like a cherry tree; beautiful girl

79. Mình vàng tóc ngọc — Golden body, jade hair; figure of a beautiful girl

80. Nắng lửa mưa dầu — Burning sunshine, rain of boiling oil; difficult times

81. Nem công chả phượng — Preserved peacock meat, phoenix dish; delicacies

82. Nhà tranh vách đất — Straw house, earth walls; poverty

83. Ông Tơ bà Nguyệt — Mr. Silk, Mrs. Moon; the Gods of marriage

84. Quê cha đất tổ — Fatherland, ancestors' land

85. Sân Trình cửa Khổng — School of the Chinese, door of Confucianism; traditional education

86. Tai trời ách nước — Catastrophe from the sky, calamity from the water

87. Tài tử văn nhân — Person of talent, man of literature; talented literate

88. Tay thầy thuốc thợ — Hand of the master, medicine of the professional; good practice

89. Tiền lưng gạo bị — Money in the money belt, rice in the basket; supplies sufficient for a journey

90. Tiền phong đạo cốt — Good posture, good form; commanding appearance, martial bearing

91. Tiền rừng bạc biển — Money like a forest, silver like an ocean; very rich

92. Tin ong sứ điệp — News from a bee, message from a butterfly; love message

93. Tình vợ nghĩa chồng — Love of a wife, affection of a husband; conjugal affection

94. Trà đình tửu điếm — Place for coffee, table for wine; place for pleasure

95. Trà lâu tửu quán — Tea house, wine shop; place of pleasure

96. Trường văn trận bút	School of literature, battlefield for pens; literary studies
97. Vóc ngọc mình ngà	Figure of jade, body of ivory; beautiful girl
98. Xóm liễu làng hoa	Hamlet of willows, village of flowers; place for pleasure

Group 4--85

Subject: Noun; Predicate: Verb

1.	Âm tiêu dương tan	To spend in the daytime, to waste at night; to ruin oneself
2.	Bèo giạt hoa trôi	The lentil strays, the flower drifts; uncertain future
3.	Bèo trôi sóng vỗ	The lentil floats, the waves beat; difficult time
4.	Bụng làm dạ chịu	The belly does, the stomach bears the consequences; one has to bear the consequences of one's acts
5.	Bụng mang dạ chửa	The belly carries, the stomach is pregnant; to be pregnant
6.	Cát bay đá chạy	The sand flies, the rocks run; calamity
7.	Cát dập sóng vùi	The sand buries, the waves cover; to disappear in the water
8.	Cỏ mọc rêu phong	The grass grows, the moss spreads; forgotten tombs
9.	Của đau con xót	Possessions create pain, children cause hurt; to regret one's wealth
10.	Cha sinh mẹ dưỡng	The father conceives, the mother nourishes
11.	Cha truyền con nối	The father wills, the children inherit; succession in the family
12.	Chị ngã em nâng	The elder sister falls, the younger one supports
13.	Chim kêu vượn hú	The birds call, the monkeys howl; very remote place
14.	Chim sa cá lặn	The fish drowns, the bird falls; utmost beauty
15.	Chồng chèo vợ chống	The husband rows, the wife pulls; common conjugal efforts
16.	Chuông hồi tiếng dục	The bell urges, the voice insists; haste

17.	Dầu sôi lửa bỏng	The oil boils, the fire burns; unbearable time
18.	Đạn lạc tên bay	The bullet goes astray, the arrow flies; hazards
19.	Đất lở trời nghiên	The earth erodes, the sky tilts; terrible
20.	Gió cuốn mây bay	The wind carries, the clouds drift; hazards
21.	Gió dồi sóng dập	The wind and the waves beat; difficult time
22.	Gió đi cỏ lướt	The wind passes, the grass lies down; to adapt to circumstances
23.	Hoa cười ngọc thốt	The flower laughs, the jade speaks; very beautiful girl
24.	Hoa nhường nguyệt thẹn	The flower yields, the moon is ashamed; very beautiful
25.	Hoa trôi bèo dạt	The flower drifts, the alga strays; unfortunate fate
26.	Hồ tan keo rã	The glue melts, the gum decomposes; separation
27.	Kẻ bưng người bợ	People carry and flatter; important person
28.	Kẻ cười người khóc	Some people laugh, some cry
29.	Kẻ chầu người chực	People wait for; important person
30.	Kẻ đón người nghênh	People meet and greet; important person
31.	Kẻ đưa người rước	People welcome and say farewell; important person
32.	Kẻ gởi người thưa	People denounce and report
33.	Kẻ giành người giựt	People disputing (over desirable merchandise)
34.	Kẻ hầu người hạ	People wait upon; important or rich person
35.	Kẻ mua người bán	People buy and sell; commercial activity, prosperity

36.	Kẻ ở người đi	Some people stay, some leave; separation
37.	Kẻ qua người lại	People pass and return; crowd, activity
38.	Kẻ tới người lui	Some people come, some go
39.	Kẻ thở người than	People sigh and lament
40.	Kẻ thù người ghét	People hate and are hostile; a person hated by everybody
41.	Kim rời cải rụng	The needle goes astray, the mustard falls; charm, inclination
42.	Khỉ ho cò gáy	The monkey coughs, the turtledove coos; remote
43.	Lá gió cành chim	The leaf in the wind, the wing of the bird; love letter
44.	Lá rụng cành rơi	The leaf falls, the branch drops; fallen
45.	Ma trêu quỉ hờn	The ghost tricks, the devil hates; hopeless, desperate
46.	Mắt thấy tai nghe	The eyes see, the ears hear; irrefutable, true
47.	Mưa gào gió thét	The rains roar, the wind hurls; stormy weather
48.	Mưa sa gió táp	The rain falls, the wind howls; dangerous place, remote
49.	Nắng táp mưa sa	The sun burns, the rain falls; bad climate
50.	Nước chảy đá mòn	The running water erodes the rocks
51.	Nước chảy hoa trôi	The running water makes the flower drift
52.	Nguyệt đổi sao vời	The moon and the stars change positions; change
53.	Người đi kẻ ở	Some people leave, some stay; separation
54.	Ong chường bướm chán	The bee and the butterfly are satiated; abandoned, forlorn

55.	Ong qua bướm lại	The bee goes, the butterfly returns; place for pleasure
56.	Phu xướng phụ tùy	The husband speaks, the wife listens
57.	Quạ bắt diều tha	The hawk catches, the crow carries away
58.	Quan tha nha bắt	The mandarin discharges, (but) the clerk seizes
59.	Quỉ khóc thần sầu	The ghost cries, the devil is sad; it is unrighteous
60.	Quỉ sợ thần kinh	The demon is afraid, the devil trembles in terror; terrible
61.	Quít làm cam chịu	The tangerine does, the orange bears the consequences
62.	Sao vời nguyệt lặn	The stars disappear, the moon hides; very beautiful
63.	Sóng giập gió dồi	The waves shake, the wind tosses
64.	Tiếng vào lời ra	The voice comes, the words go; arguments
65.	Tai bay họa gởi	Disaster flies, misfortune gropes; misfortune
66.	Tàng che lọng lợp	The shade covers, the parasol shades; well protected
67.	Tay bắt mặt mừng	The hands shake (to shake hands), the face is gay; to be pleased to see and to welcome somebody
68.	Tay đấm chơn đá	The hands beat, the feet kick; to fight
69.	Tay làm hàm nhai	The hands work, the jaws chew; to make just enough for a living
70.	Tay xách nách mang	The hands carry, the arms hold; to carry many things
71.	Tin đi mối lại	The news goes out, the message comes back; frequent communication
72.	Thỏ lặn ác tà	The hare (fig: moon) disappears, the sun sets; time passes
73.	Thỏ tử hồ bi	The hare dies, the fox is sad; love for one's race

74.	Tre già măng mọc	The bamboo gets old, the bud grows; succession of generations
75.	Trời che đất chở	The sky covers, the earth supports; supernatural protection
76.	Trời đánh thánh đâm	The sky hits, the earth stabs; unscrupulous person
77.	Trời tru đất diệt	The sky exterminates, the earth kills; calamities
78.	Trời xui đất khiến	The sky presses, the earth compels; providence
79.	Vạ gió tai bay	Calamity blows (like the wind), disaster flies; calamity
80.	Vách đổ tường xiêu	The wall falls, the partition tilts; decreptitude
81.	Vàng ròng bạc chảy	The gold flows, the silver cascades; waste
82.	Vật đổi sao dời	Things change, stars move; change
83.	Voi giày ngựa đạp	The elephant smashes, the horse steps on; to maltreat
84.	Xuân qua hạ lại	The spring goes, the summer returns; time flies
85.	Xương tàn cốt rủ	The bones corrode, the joints rot; to be sad

Group 5--46

Determiner: Numeral; Head: Noun

1.	Ba bó một gịa	Three bundles, one stubble; speaking about very careful work
2.	Ba cọc ba đồng	Three rolls, three piastres; exact count
3.	Ba cơm bảy cháo	Three rice courses, seven soups; difficult task
4.	Ba chân bốn cẳng	Three feet, four paws; at full speed
5.	Ba chớp ba nhoáng	Three glimpses, three glares; without care, not well considered
6.	Ba dãy bảy khê	Three rolls, seven stacks; masses of things
7.	Ba dãy bảy ngang	Three rolls, seven reams; masses of things
8.	Ba đầu sáu tay	Three heads, six hands; very talented person
9.	Ba điều bốn chuyện	Three items, four topics of conversation; generally
10.	Ba đời bảy họ	Three generations, seven family names; generations
11.	Ba đứng ba loài	Three classes, three categories; many species
12.	Ba hồn chín vía	Three spirits, seven vital souls; the whole spiritual force
13.	Ba sương một nắng	Three periods of fog, one period of sunshine; hardships
14.	Bách nhân bách khẩu	A hundred men, a hundred mouths; each person has his own opinion
15.	Bốn phương tám hướng	Four cardinal directions, eight directions; cardinal directions, everywhere
16.	Chín đụn mười trâu	Nine granaries, ten buffaloes; rich
17.	Một đầu một kép	One head, one actor; two persons in perfect harmony

18.	Một đồng một cốt	One field, one skeleton; two persons in perfect harmony
19.	Một nắng hai sương	One period of sunshine, two of fog; hardships
20.	Một duyên hai nợ	One destiny, two fates; predestined affinity
21.	Muôn hồng ngàn tía	Ten thousand red rays, a thousand beams; radiance
22.	Năm cha ba mẹ	Five fathers, three mothers; to be under the command of many people
23.	Năm cơm bảy cháo	Five rice courses, seven soups; hard work
24.	Năm châu sáu giồng	The five continents, the six human races; the world
25.	Năm đụn bảy bồ	Five heaps, seven granaries; rich, good harvest
26.	Năm hồi mười hiệp	Five times, ten turns; many times
27.	Năm khi mười họa	Five times, ten times; very rarely
28.	Năm lần bảy lượt	Five times, seven turns; many times
29.	Năm ngăn bảy nấp	Five partitions, seven divisions; red tape
30.	Năm tao bảy tiết	Five strands, seven seasons; many times
31.	Năm thê bảy thiếp	Five wives, seven concubines; polygamous
32.	Tứ cố vô thân	Four hazards, no one; alone, abandoned
33.	Tứ mùa tám tiết	Four seasons, eight weathers; the year
34.	Tứ phân ngũ liệt	Four divisions, five dissentions; dissentions
35.	Tứ phủ vạn binh	The four principal divinities (sky, earth, water, forest), ten thousand troops; power
36.	Tứ phương bát diện	Four directions, eight faces; everywhere
37.	Thập tử nhứt sinh	Ten deaths, one survival; difficult to survive

38.	Thiên hình vạn trạng	A thousand forms, ten thousand states; multiform
39.	Thiên lao vạn khổ	A thousand difficulties, ten thousand hardships
40.	Thiên sơn vạn thủy	A thousand mountains, ten thousand waters; great space, variety
41.	Thiên phương bách kế	A thousand means, ten thousand tactics; many ways
42.	Thiên thu vạn tuế	A thousand autumns, ten thousand years; eternal
43.	Thiên truy vạn điệp	A thousand successions, ten thousand repetitions; uncountable
44.	Trăm công ngàn việc	A hundred jobs, a thousand things to do
45.	Trăm hồng ngàn tía	A hundred red rays, a thousand beams; radiance
46.	Trăm mưu ngàn kế	A hundred plots, a thousand tactics; many ways

Group 6--45

Predicate: Verb; Manner Complement: Adjective

1.	Ăn cực ở khổ	To eat poorly, to live miserably
2.	Ăn dưng ngồi rồi	To eat and sit idly; to be unoccupied, idle
3.	Ăn đói mặc rách	To eat yet have hunger unsatisfied, to dress raggedly: undernourished, badly dressed, very poor
4.	Ăn hoang mặc rộng	To eat wastefully, to dress abundantly; to spend a lot
5.	Ăn giang nói dối	To eat and speak deceitfully
6.	Ăn kì làm dối	To eat seriously, to work amateurishly
7.	Ăn no mặc ấm	To eat enough, to dress warmly; to have enough food and clothing
8.	Ăn no ngủ kỹ	To eat enough, to sleep well; to have a good life
9.	Ăn nhín mặc nhúm	To eat stingily, to dress penuriously
10.	Ăn ngay ở thật	To eat straightforwardly, to live trustworthily; to be sincere
11.	Ăn ngon mặc đẹp	To eat good food, to dress beautifully; to be well off
12.	Ăn ngược ăn xuôi	To eat up one side, down the other; to get by any means, to bribe, to be corrupt
13.	Ăn sang mặc choáng	To eat richly, to dress brilliantly; to live a rich life
14.	Ăn sang mặc trọng	To eat and dress luxuriously; to be well off
15.	Ăn sống nuốt tươi	To eat alive, to swallow fresh; to devour, to take by force
16.	Ăn sung mặc sướng	To live and dress abundantly; to live a good life
17.	Ăn tiện ở tặn	To eat stingily, to dress penuriously
18.	Ăn to nói lớn	To eat a lot, to speak loudly; to have rude manners

19.	Ăn tươi nuốt sống	To eat fresh, to swallow alive; to devour, to take by force
20.	Ăn thiệt làm dối	To eat seriously, to work sloppily
21.	Ăn thô nói tục	To eat without manners, to speak coarsely; to have rude manners
22.	Bại hư bại vọng	To rot completely and hopelessly; corrupt, rotten
23.	Bàn dài bàn mỏng	To discuss thick and thin; to discuss the strong and the weak points
24.	Bàn khôn bàn dại	To discuss the intelligent and the stupid; to weigh the pros and cons
25.	Bàn suông tán hão	To discuss uselessly, to argue unrealistically
26.	Bắt tròn bắt méo	To scrutinize for the round, for the deformed, to search for deformity; to criticize, to examine minutely
27.	Bỏ rơi bỏ rớt	To let something fall by carelessness
28.	Bỏ ngược bỏ xuôi	To run forward and backward; to run everywhere
29.	Buồn ủ buồn ê	To be really sad
30.	Cày sâu cuốc bẫm	To plow deeply, to hoe firmly; hard work in the fields
31.	Cười ngất cười ngưởng	To choke with laughter
32.	Chạy ngược chạy xuôi	To run back and forth; to run in all directions
33.	Chết mê chết mệt	To die of passion, to die of fatigue; passionate, impassioned
34.	Chửa hoang đẻ lạnh	To be pregnant out of wedlock, to give birth in the cold; to have a child out of wedlock
35.	Dạo mỏng rào thưa	To fence off thinly and thickly; to speak with many reservations
36.	Đàn tính đàn tứ	To study, to think over carefully
37.	Đánh to thua lớn	To play for high stakes, to lose enormously

38.	Đăng cao viễn vọng	To climb up high, to see far; learned person
39.	Làm chơi ăn thật	To work amateurishly, to eat seriously; gain not equal to expenses
40.	Mang nặng đẻ đau	To carry heavily, to give birth with suffering; the pain of labor
41.	Mua giành bán giựt	To buy and sell while disputing over the merchandise; to contend for business
42.	Mua may bán đắt	To buy fortunately, to sell at high price; to be fortunate in business
43.	Quạt nóng ấp lạnh	To fan when it is hot, to heat when it is cold; conjugal care
44.	Sinh sau đẻ muộn	Born late, come to life late; inferior
45.	Sống giở, chết giở	To live half, to die half; very unhappy, very painful; to be half alive, half dead

Group 7--41

Modifier: Adjective; Head: Noun

1.	An cư lạc nghiệp	Peaceful place to live, settled profession; peace
2.	Ấm cật no lòng	Warm (kidneys), full (stomach); good life
3.	Bà tâm khổ khẩu	Maternal heart, (but) harsh mouth
4.	Bạch diện thơ sinh	White face, recently born; inexperienced
5.	Bầm gan tím ruột	Purple liver, blackened bowels; very angry
6.	Bầm mặt tái môi	Purple face, blackened lips; very angry
7.	Cả cơm lớn tiền	Big meal, big bill; "If you want to play, you'll have to pay."
8.	Cả tiếng dài hơi	Big voice, long breath; long arguments
9.	Cô lậu quả văn	Narrow-minded, mean literary style; narrow-mindedness
10.	Cô nhi quả phụ	Orphan, widow
11.	Cô thân chiếc bóng	Lonely person, single shadow; lonely
12.	Cùng đường khắp nẻo	The end of roads and passes; by all means
13.	Cùng hội cùng thuyền	Same association, same boat; in the same situation
14.	Cường hào ác bá	Influential boss, cruel chief; cruel superior
15.	Danh gia vọng tộc	Fine family, famous clan
16.	Danh lam thắng cảnh	Famous mountains, spectacular scenery
17.	Đau lòng xót dạ	Hurting heart, sore stomach; pitiful
18.	Đắt quế ế củi	Expensive cinnamon, cheap wood; to run after something and neglect something else

19.	Gian phu dâm phụ	Culpable husband, sinful wife; adulterous couple
20.	Hào hoa phong nhã	Noble and elegant appearance
21.	Ích quốc lợi dân	Useful to the country, beneficial to the people
22.	Kín cổng cao tường	Secluding gate, high wall; secluded (girl)
23.	Lớn tiếng rọng họng	Big voice, wide-open mouth; rude
24.	Mạt kiếp cùng căn	Penniless fate, end of good fortune; hopeless
25.	Minh nguyệt thanh phong	Clear moon, healthy wind; beautiful weather
26.	Minh quân lương tể	Intelligent mandarins, honest generals; good administration
27.	Minh tâm khắc cốt	To carve in the heart and bones; to perpetuate the memory
28.	Phàm phu tục tử	Mean husband, vulgar son; of low birth
29.	Tao nhơn mặc khách	Distinguished man, good writer; well-educated man
30.	Tận tâm kiệt lực	With all the heart and strength; devoted
31.	Tiên chủ hậu khách	First the host, then the guests; to take care of oneself before the others
32.	Tốt mã rã đám	Good horse, ruined party; if excessively equipped, then an unsuccessful enterprise
33.	Túc trái tiền oan	Debt from a preceeding life; Buddhist fatalism
34.	Thành tâm thiệt ý	Pious heart, true idea; honest, pious
35.	Thiện nam tín nữ	Virtuous males, religious females; believers in the Buddhist religion
36.	Thuận buồm xuôi gió	Favorable sails and wind; good luck
37.	Thuần phong mỹ tục	Honest and refined customs
38.	Tràng giang đại hải	Long river, immense ocean; endless

39.	Trắng da dài tóc	White skin, long hair; beautiful
40.	Trung thần nghĩa sĩ	Loyal subjects, righteous men
41.	Yên nhà lợi nước	Peaceful house, beneficial to the country; profitable

Group 8--36

Head: Adjective; Modifier: Noun or Verb

1.	Anh hào liệt sĩ	Cousin, person of the same family rank as oneself but belonging to an elder branch
2.	Bạt loại siêu quần	Exceptional, eminent
3.	Bạt thiên đại đảm	Very great courage
4.	Bất ngô bất ngạo	Not arrogant or haughty
5.	Cao lễ dễ thưa	(With) big gifts, (it is) easy to ask (for a favor)
6.	Cô phong độc phú	Exceptionally talented
7.	Cùng thông bĩ thái	Impasse or through road, failure or success
8.	Dầy gió dạn sương	Hardened by the wind and fog; experienced
9.	Đa ngôn đa bại	Many words, many failures
10.	Đa ngôn vô ích	Many words, no results
11.	Đa sầu đa cảm	Full of sadness and sad feelings; easily saddened
12.	Đa tình chí mạng	(To be) full of love (sometimes can be) disastrous
13.	Đa mưu túc trí	Full of tricks, plenty of intelligence
14.	Đau chóng mạnh chầy	(Gets) sick quickly, recovers slowly
15.	Đắm nguyệt say hoa	Submerged by the moon, drunken by flowers; given to pleasure
16.	Đinh tai nhức óc	Deafening the ears, causing the head to ache; unbearable
17.	Gần nhà xa ngõ	Near to the house, far to the gate; two families that do not see each other any more
18.	Lao tâm nhọc trí	Painful to the heart and mind
19.	Lỡ chơn trái bước	To stumble, to slip, to make a mistake

20.	Lừng danh nổi tiếng	Shining name, brilliant fame
21.	Mau chơn nhạy miệng	Quick in running and speaking; quick
22.	No cơm ấm áo	Full (of food), warm (clothing)
23.	Phúc chủ may thầy	Lucky (in getting the) master and (the) doctor; to have found the right method
24.	Quá lứa lỡ thì	Overage, missed opportunity; spinster
25.	Quanh năm suốt tháng	All the year round (the month round)
26.	Quãng kiến đa văn	To see widely, to speak much; well educated
27.	To gan lớn mật	Big liver; brave, daring
28.	Tối lửa tắt đèn	Extinguished fire, extinguished torch; needy
29.	Thảo cha ngay chúa	Pious to the father, honest to the lord
30.	Trái tai gai mắt	Pounding the ear, a thorn in the eye
31.	Trắc nết lang tâm	Bad behavior, evil (heart)
32.	Vang trời dậy đất	The whole sky resounds, the whole earth shakes; terrible
33.	Vô công rỗi nghề	No work, (easy profession); has little to do
34.	Vô duyên bạc phận	Unlucky (fate), unhappy (lot)
35.	Xanh vỏ đỏ lòng	Green outside, red inside; kindhearted although having a crude appearance
36.	Xứng đôi vừa lứa	Well-matched couple

Group 9--27

Predicate: Transitive Verb; Direct Object: Nominalized Adjective

1.	Ẩm đam chỉ khát	To drink an intoxicating beverage to quench one's thirst; for a little pleasure, to get disaster
2.	Ẩn ác dương thiện	To hide the evil and show the good
3.	Bác cổ thông kim	To be well versed in the old things, to be well aware of the new things
4.	Bạc hạ mị thượng	To disdain inferiors, to flatter superiors
5.	Bàn hư tán nhảm	To discuss the negative, to talk about nothing; dull discussions
6.	Bàn ngang tán dọc	To discuss width, to talk about length; to speak at random
7.	Bớt giận làm lành	To calm one's anger, to do good; calmed anger
8.	Cải tà qui chánh	To reform evil, to return to righteousness; to reform
9.	Có mới nới cũ	To have the new, to forget the old
10.	Cô ơn phụ ái	To ignore a favor received, to neglect a favor; ungrateful
11.	Cử thanh xích trọc	To choose honest individuals
12.	Chia vui xẻ ngọt	To share joy, to divide sweetness
13.	Dày sành đạp sỏi	To step on experience; to be experienced
14.	Dĩ bạo dịch bạo	To use violence in response to violence
15.	Dĩ tiểu dịch đại	To exchange little for much
16.	Dinh tư bội công	To increase one's own profit, to neglect the masses' wealth; to seek for one's own profit
17.	Dục tốc bất đạt	To hasten and get no result; you get nowhere if you hurry
18.	Đạt tài thành đức	To achieve talent, to realize a quality; fulfill talent and virtue

19.	Đổi trắng thay đen	To change white, to replace black; to change
20.	Hữu sinh vô dưỡng	To give birth and take no care; to give birth to one's children but to have no care for them
21.	Ngôn thiểu tri đa	Few words, much intelligence; to speak little but to know a lot
22.	Sớt ngọt xẻ bùi	To share the sweet, to divide the tasty; to share the good things in life
23.	Suy hơn tính thiệt	To think of the advantage, to take the disadvantage into consideration; to think of the pros and cons
24.	Sưu cao thuế nặng	To tax heavily
25.	Thay cũ đổi mới	To replace the old with the new
26.	Thay đen đổi trắng	To replace black, to change white; to change completely
27.	Thông kim bác cổ	To know the new well, to be well aware of the old

Group 10--26

Predicate: Verb; Manner Complement: Verb

1.	Ác giả ác báo	The bad are punished; imminent justice
2.	Ác y ác thực	Terrible clothing and food; miserable life
3.	Ăn có ó không	To be present at meals but not at work
4.	Ăn gởi nằm nhờ	To eat and lie down at others' homes; to be homeless
5.	Ăn không nói có	To eat negatively, to speak positively; to lie, to slander
6.	Ăn không ở nể	To eat and do nothing; to stay idle
7.	Ăn ngã nằm ngồi	To eat while lying down, to lie back while sitting; bad manners
8.	Ăn vay mặc nợ	To eat and to dress while borrowing; to be indebted, to borrow for food and clothing
9.	Ăn vụng làm càn	To eat stealthily, to work recklessly; reckless
10.	Bàn ra bàn vào	To discuss, to deliberate; to give opposite opinions
11.	Bắt chặt bắt khoan	To overload somebody with work, to observe him closely; undue harassment
12.	Buôn thua bán lỗ	To buy at an exceedingly high price, to sell at a loss; bad business
13.	Cày thuê cuốc mướn	To plow and hoe for pay; to have no land of one's own, to be poor
14.	Còn ăn hết nhịn	To eat when there is still something, to abstain when there is nothing left; self-reliance
15.	Còn nước còn tát	To bail when there is still water; while there is life there is hope
16.	Chết đâm chết chém	To die of stab wounds; curse
17.	Chịu giỏ chịu vả	To be spat upon and slapped; to be humiliated

18.	Chối bay chối biến	(To deny while flying and disappearing); to lie shamelessly
19.	Đay đi đối lại	To reply quickly
20.	Đão đi đão lại	To beat around the bush
21.	Đói ăn khát uống	To eat when one is hungry, to drink when one is thirsty; to satisfy one's need
22.	Lời ăn lỗ chịu	To eat when one makes a profit, to endure when one incurs a deficit; self-reliance
23.	Lường thăng trảo đấu	To change measurements; to cheat
24.	Mạnh được yếu thua	To win when one is powerful, to lose when one is weak; survival of the fittest
25.	Mua lạy bán dạ	To bow when buying, to plead when selling; to be on the weaker side
26.	Thương vay khóc mướn	To love and weep for money

Group II--21

Predicate: Verb; Manner Complement: Noun

1.	Ăn chay nằm đất	To be a vegetarian, to lie down on the ground; to practice religion
2.	Ăn đình ngủ quán	To eat at the village temple, to sleep in a tavern; vagrant
3.	Ăn đời ở kiếp	To eat the whole life, to stay the whole generation; to stay forever in the same place
4.	Ăn gió nằm mưa	To eat in the wind, to lie down in the rain; to have many misfortunes
5.	Ăn lông ở lỗ	To eat raw meat, to live in a cave; savage
6.	Ăn sương nằm tuyết	To eat in the fog, to lie down on the snow; to live a hard life
7.	Ăn thuở ở thì	To eat and live accordingly, conforming to the current rules
8.	Ăn xó mó xiêu	To eat in a corner, to handle a broken pot; poverty-stricken
9.	Ăn xổi ở thì	To live from day to day
10.	Ăn xưa chừa nay	To eat in the past, to abstain now; to profit from experience
11.	Cầm thương lên ngựa	To arm oneself with a spear, to mount a horse; military sorties
12.	Câu chuồm thả ao	To fish in a marsh, to drop (it) in a pond; not to profit from what one has
13.	Đi mây về gió	To go on a cloud, to return on a wind
14.	Đi ngược về xuôi	To go upstream, to come back downstream; to give oneself all hardships to arrive (at one's aim)
15.	Học tài thi mạng	Your study progress depends upon your talent, but your examination results depend upon your fate; fatalism
16.	Thua lừa mắc lận	To be cheated

17.	Thương thay khóc mướn	Simulated sorrows (to sigh and weep for payment)
18.	Van thay lạy mướn	To scrape and bow for payment; to simulate religious acts
19.	Vào chầu ra chực	To wait upon hand and foot; excessive submission
20.	Vào lòn ra cúi	To cringe when entering and going out; excessive fear of the stronger
21.	Xui nguyên dục bị	To excite the two parties in dispute

Group 12--21

Head: Noun; Modifier: Verb

1.	Cách ăn nết ở	Manner of eating, conduct of living; manners, behavior
2.	Công ăn việc làm	Work to earn one's living
3.	Công đồng thương định	Work equalled, business determined; to accept something with a common accord
4.	Công trọng ơn dầy	Great merit, immeasurable deeds
5.	Cờ gian bạc lận	(To cheat at chess and gambling); to cheat
6.	Cơm ăn áo mặc	Rice to eat, clothing to wear; food and clothing
7.	Cửa đóng then gài	Doors shut, latches locked; over-defensive
8.	Chồng chắp vợ nối	Second husband, second wife; second marriage
9.	Đầu ấp tay gối	Head covered, arm used as pillow; conjugal affection
10.	Đường đi lối về	The way to go, the path to come back; way
11.	Đường đi nước bước	The way to go, the path to step on; way
12.	Lời ăn tiếng nói	The way to eat, the voice to speak; manners, behavior
13.	Lời qua tiếng lại	The voice to, the speech fro; arguments, discussions
14.	Màn treo sáo phủ	Drapes hung down, shutters pulled down; well-decorated (house)
15.	Quần vận yếm mang	Trousers worn, blouse put on; all dressed up
16.	Tả xong hữu đột	The left attacked, the right invaded; to attack on all fronts
17.	Tiền mất tật mang	Money lost, infirmity remains; unsuccessful enterprise

18.	Tiền trao cháo mút	Money given, soup poured; pay first before you get your merchandise
19.	Tranh treo màn cuốn	Paintings hung, drapes fixed; to decorate (house) beautifully
20.	Trâm cày lược vắt	The pin on, the comb in place; to dress up beautifully
21.	Văn tặp võ luyện	Literary knowledge tried out, military sciences practiced; practice

Group 13--20

Relator: Time Expression; Head: Noun

1.	Nay dao mai thớt	Today knife, tomorrow chopping board; fighting all the time, having arguments all the time
2.	Nay đau mai mạnh	Sick today, well tomorrow; poor health
3.	Nay lần mai lựa	Delaying today, choosing tomorrow; hesitating, noncommittal
4.	Nay tan mai hiệp	Dispersing today, regrouping tomorrow; ephemerous
5.	Nay trôi mai nổi	Today drifting, tomorrow floating; errant, vagabond, Bohemian
6.	Nay vầy mai khác	Today like this, tomorrow like that (different); not constant
7.	Ngày than đêm thở	To sigh in the daytime, to lament at night; to continually express one's feelings of doom
8.	Ngày trông đêm đợi	To expect (somebody) in the daytime, to wait for him at night; to wait all the time
9.	Sớm cơm chiều cháo	Rice in the morning, soup in the evening; good treatment
10.	Sớm đầu tối đánh	To surrender in the morning, to fight at night; untrustworthy
11.	Sớm thăm tối viếng	Visits in the morning and in the evening; well looked after
12.	Tiền trảm hậu tấu	To decapitate first, to report after; "fait accompli"
13.	Tự cổ chí kim	From ancient to present times
14.	Từ đầu chí cuối	From beginning to end
15.	Tự thủ chí vĩ	From beginning to end
16.	Thượng hành hạ hiệu	To work first, to enjoy later
17.	Thượng thổ hạ tả	Vomiting and diarrheic; be badly sick
18.	Thượng thực hạ hư	Real first, unreal afterwards; ephemerous

19. Trên thuận dưới hòa	Harmony at upper and lower levels
20. Trước lạ sau quen	Stranger at the beginning (but) friendly at the end

Group 14--17

Determiner: Numeral; Head: Verb

1.	Ba chìm bảy nổi	Three-tenths submerged, seven-tenths afloat; having a difficult time, ups and downs
2.	Ba lo bảy liệu	Three-tenths worrying, seven-tenths calculating; to worry and think
3.	Ba lừa bảy lọc	Three-tenths selecting, seven-tenths choosing; to select carefully
4.	Bách chiến bách thắng	A hundred times fighting, a hundred times winning
5.	Bách chiết bất hồi	A hundred times smashed, never losing courage; persistent
6.	Bách chiết thiên ma	A hundred times smashed, a thousand times crushed; come what may, whatever the cost
7.	Bách triết thiên ma	To expose oneself to a hundred dangers and a thousand perils
8.	Bán sinh bán tử	Half dead, half alive
9.	Bán sống bán chết	Half dead, half alive
10.	Bán tín bán nghi	Half believing, half doubting
11.	Năm lọc mười lừa	Five times screened, ten times eliminated; very carefully selected
12.	Nửa úp nửa mở	Half closed, half open
13.	Thiên biến vạn hóa	A thousand times changed, ten thousand times transformed
14.	Thiên tân vạn khổ	A thousand times renewed, ten thousand times wretched; conservatism
15.	Thiên truy vạn điệp	A thousand times succeeding, ten thousand times repeated; uncountable
16.	Trăm đắng ngàn cay	A hundred times bitter, a thousand times peppery hot; very bitter, harsh, grievous
17.	Trăm khéo ngàn khéo	A hundred times skillful, a thousand times intelligent; very skillful and intelligent

Group 15--11

Predicate: Verb; Manner Complement: Adverb

1.	Ăn chơi ở lỡ	To eat and live lavishly, wastefully
2.	Ăn chung ở chạ	To eat together, to live together; to have an affair
3.	Ăn chung ở lộn	To eat together, to live together; to have an affair
4.	Ăn nhưng ngồi rồi	To eat and sit idly
5.	Âm khiển minh tru	To punish secretly, to kill in the dark; sneaky
6.	Bàn ra tán vào	To discourage, to encourage; to intervene in others' business
7.	Đánh đôi đánh đọ	To frequent, to tie friendship; to familiarize oneself (with pejorative meaning)
8.	Đi quanh về tắt	To go around, to come back straight; to make every effort
9.	Đi trưa về sớm	To go in the afternoon, to come back early in the morning; to go out often, to work hard
10.	Đi sớm về tối	To go early, to come back late; to work hard
11.	Quanh đi quẩn lại	To turn around and around; summary, repetitive (bad connection)

Group 16--7

Predicate: Verb; Location Complement: Adverb

1. Ăn trên ngồi trước	To eat at the head table, to sit in the front; important person
2. Dối trên lừa dưới	To lie and cheat
3. Đón trước rào sau	To guard the front, to fence off the back; to prevent any hazard, to speak with reservation
4. Đỡ trên gạt dưới	To ward off blows from all directions
5. Gở ra buộc vào	To untie, to tie; to change one's position, opinion
6. Nói ra nói vào	To speak for and against
7. Rào trước đón sau	To fence off the front, to guard the back: to prevent any hazard, to speak with reservation

Group 17--7

Head: Noun; Modifier: Indefinite Article

1.	Bửa nào bửa nấy	Every day, all days
2.	Cha nào con nấy	Like father, like son
3.	Chàng đâu thiếp đấy	Wherever you (my husband) are, I should be there
4.	Chứng nào tật nấy	Such vice, such infirmity; incorrigible
5.	Kẻ nọ người kia	Those people, those folks, they, them
6.	Nồi nào vung nấy	This pot, this cover; two things should match each other
7.	Rày đây mai đó	Today here, tomorrow there; vagrant